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THE  
LOTUS A Possible Opportunity.



T would be interesting if several times in the course of a musical season we could hear a great Italian maestro di capella conduct a symphony concert. In Toscanini we have such a conductor, but as a director of concerts his efforts are confined to Sunday night performances at the opera house. These concerts afford no real test, because they draw a public that wants to hear, at popular prices, some of the fine singers it cannot afford to hear in opera. Moreover the orchestra is not properly balanced for a real concert performance, which requires as great a preponderance of strings as was employed in the production of "Armide" with, in addition, the full complement of instruments in the other divisions.

So far as New York is concerned there probably are too many orchestras as it is. Nor could the conductor mentioned give enough time from opera to direct a series of concerts. This, however, might not prevent his conducting one or two orchestral concerts with full concert

orchestra in the course of a season. It would be an interesting experience.

Theodore Thomas once told me that he credited the fine quality of tone he was able to draw from his orchestra, to his experience as a conductor of Italian opera. And indeed there is no better school for the cultivation of beauty of tone. It is altogether probable that a great Italian conductor would rediscover for us those beauties of the classical repertoire that have been obscured by the prevalent mania for "new readings." That in itself would be worth while. No less a literary magazine than the "Century" once printed these lines:—

Who wouldn't be a barnyard hen  
and lay a calm egg now and then?

In these days of excited and esoteric renderings of classic masterpieces, a calm egg now and then in place of the scrambled variety usually offered to puzzled concert audiences, might prove an acceptable substitute.

*Gustav Kobbé*